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## Viewing cable 07PARIS4650, SARKOZY EAGER TO ACT ON COLOMBIA HOSTAGE SITUATION

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#07PARIS4650**.

| Reference ID                | Created                          | Released                         | Classification         | Origin                        |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <a href="#">07PARIS4650</a> | <a href="#">2007-12-06 10:35</a> | <a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a> | <a href="#">SECRET</a> | <a href="#">Embassy Paris</a> |

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/04/2017  
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SUBJECT: SARKOZY EAGER TO ACT ON COLOMBIA HOSTAGE SITUATION

Classified By: POL/MC Josiah Rosenblatt for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S/NOFORN) SUMMARY. Franco-Colombian hostage Ingrid Betancourt's "proof of life" letter had a profound impact on President Sarkozy and only reinforced his personal

engagement, according to Presidential Advisor for the Americas' Damien Loras. Sarkozy is reviewing options following a December 1 telephone call with President Uribe, who rejected Sarkozy's suggestion that Senator Cordoba serve as mediator and instead renewed a request for French mediation. While Sarkozy declined such a role without first having access to FARC leaders and potential leverage such as prisoner releases, Loras noted the French President is set to do something "spectacular" in the coming days, foreshadowing Sarkozy's broadcast messages to Betancourt and the FARC. Sarkozy attributes the long sought "proof of life" to Chavez's intervention, a view he shared with Uribe. Sarkozy is considering how to discreetly use Chavez's influence with the FARC to French (U.S. and Colombian) advantage. Comment: Given Sarkozy's personal involvement, we must stay in as close as possible contact with the French as this process unfolds -- a judgment that we are told Sarkozy shares. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (S/NOFORN) On December 4 Presidential Advisor for the Americas Damien Loras reported that Sarkozy is redoubling his efforts on behalf of Ingrid Betancourt following receipt of her "proof of life" (POL) letter addressed to her mother. Loras said that Sarkozy is set to do something "spectacular" and noted that the French President had considered meeting FARC leader Manuel Marulanda, but ultimately decided otherwise. Sarkozy is ready to act "in the coming days." Loras welcomed a close dialogue with the U.S. on this issue adding Sarkozy intends to discuss the hostage situation with President Bush. Loras alerted us late December 5 that Sarkozy was about to record for radio broadcast a "compassionate message" to the hostages, letting them know the international community is mobilized to seek their freedom, along with a video message to the FARC appealing for the humanitarian release of Betancourt. Loras stated that the Presidency was concerned that her physical and psychological state had deteriorated to the point that her life was in danger.

¶3. (S/NOFORN) Loras reported that on the December 1 phone call between Sarkozy and Colombian President Uribe, Sarkozy told Uribe that POL now exists -- which he attributed to Chavez' intervention. Sarkozy did not ask Uribe to reconsider his decision on Chavez' mediation, proposing instead that Uribe consider authorizing Senator Cordoba. According to Loras, Uribe was negative, asking Sarkozy instead to resume France's own mediation. Sarkozy replied that he would not -- at least until Uribe provides: a) access to all FARC leaders, and b) negotiating leverage, in the form of FARC prisoner releases or other such bargaining tools.

¶4. (S/NOFORN) Loras made clear that Sarkozy is not pushing the GOC to reinstate Chavez as chief negotiator, understanding that this is politically impossible for Uribe. At the same time, the GOF believes Uribe purposely unraveled Chavez's efforts precisely because they appeared to be working; the Colombians feared Chavez was making the negotiations too political and too public. Loras professed understanding of why Chavez's methods are unacceptable to Uribe, but warned (without elaboration) that there will be problems if Uribe attempts to unravel GOF efforts. Loras said the French are still trying to decide how to discreetly use Chavez's demonstrated influence with the FARC to the French (and US and Colombian) advantage, in such a way that is not counter-productive with Bogota.

¶5. (S/NOFORN) Loras highlighted the importance of working with the U.S. and the Colombians on this issue. He added that Sarkozy would make this point directly to President Bush during their next phone conversation. Noting that Sarkozy will not refrain from asking for help, he reported that Sarkozy will ask President Bush to use our influence to prevail on Uribe to give France space to work on hostage release and to intensify intelligence exchange on the issue. Loras admitted that France's intelligence in the region is quite minimal; France wants to increase its knowledge of the FARC. Loras noted specifically that some FARC leaders reportedly have family in Europe, which could be useful

leverage at an appropriate time.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

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